



**Glenn Johnson,**  
**Mayor**  
City of Pullman



**Jon Lane, Mayor**  
City of Moses Lake



**Mike McGinn,**  
**Mayor**  
City of Seattle



**Keith McGlashan,**  
**Mayor**  
City of Shoreline



**Dan Pike, Mayor**  
City of Bellingham



**Marilyn**  
**Strickland, Mayor**  
City of Tacoma



**Mary Verner,**  
**Mayor**  
City of Spokane



**Steve Young,**  
**Mayor**  
City of Kennewick

August 22, 2011

Jim Larkin  
CEO, Village Voice Media  
36 Cooper Square  
New York, NY 10003

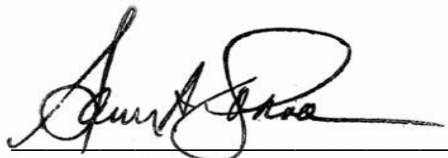
Dear Mr. Larkin:

We, the undersigned mayors of cities in Washington State, write to urge you to take steps to prevent the use of Backpage.com for underage sex trafficking by requiring in-person verification of any prospective escort advertiser's ID, as well as proof of identity and age for anyone pictured in an escort ad. There is an urgent need to act quickly, as our cities have continued to find advertisements on your site that reflect underage sex trafficking in recent weeks.

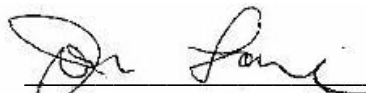
Backpage.com does not employ adequate safeguards to prevent underage sex trafficking. To place an ad on Backpage.com, all one has to do is check a box saying that the person featured in the ad is over age 18. Other advertising services require a photo ID to be brought to an office, in person, to verify age. We believe this practice is substantially more effective at rooting out underage sex trafficking. In the last 18 months the City of Seattle has not found any evidence of underage sex trafficking on sites requiring photo ID. Since the beginning of 2010, 22 children advertised on Backpage.com were recovered by the Seattle Police Department. The Tacoma Police Department reports that they are currently working on 16 cases of juvenile prostitution involving 14 persons who had Backpage.com ads.

We urge you to take quick action and help us address underage sex trafficking by requiring photo ID.

Sincerely,



Glenn Johnson  
Mayor of Pullman



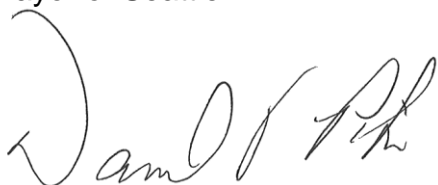
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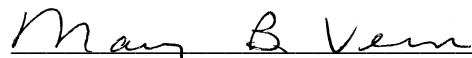
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